

**Train Journey**

Let me tell you about today's railway train journey, which will provide an opportunity to practise some railway and travel vocabulary. I arrived at the train station in good time for my travel plan. I walked past the waiting room and ticket office, and out onto the bridge. I touched my card on the reader (this is called touching in and touching out), listening for the beeping\* sound and seeing the indicator light changing from orange to green, which shows that it has been accepted. I descended the steel staircase carefully holding on to the handrail\*. It is not a good idea to put the card away whilst going down the steps! I walked along the platform past the coffee and snack vendor's\* hut and the other travellers and commuters waiting for their\* trains. I went further along the platform as far as the last shelter, so that I would be about level with the end carriage, which is usually less crowded than the others. At last\* I saw the

train's bright white headlights approaching out of the mist in the distance. The announcer informed us that certain trains had been delayed by several minutes, but I am glad to say that\* mine arrived on time.

- \* "bleeping" Keep the hook clear, as "beeping" means the same
- \* "handrail" Necessary to emphasise the angle between the two strokes
- \* "vendor's" Does not use doubling, because it is an "-or" sound, not "-er"
- \* "for their" The short form "for" is never doubled, and "if" can be doubled, in order to ensure clarity in phrases. "If their" would be doubled.
- \* "at last" and "at least" Always insert the vowel
- \* Omission phrase "I am glad (to) s(ay) that"

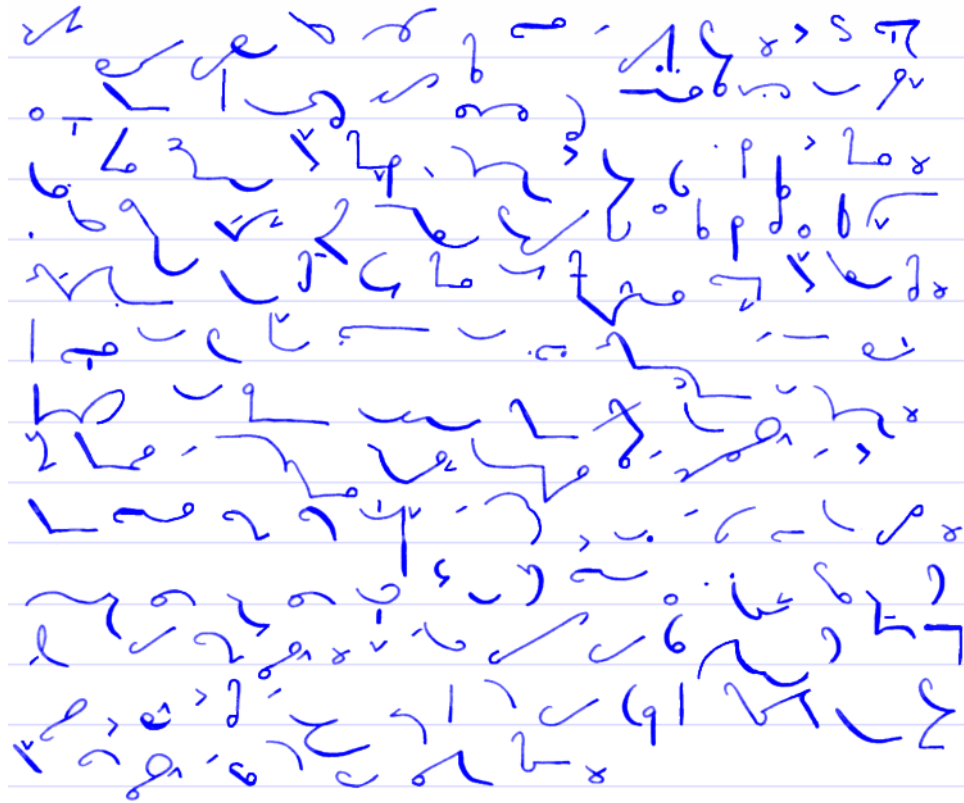


**Train Journey**

In our trains the seats are mostly\* in pairs, with two or three\* seats facing another two or three\*. I found some newspapers on the seat and put them in the luggage rack out of the way. I sat by the window and then I heard the rapid beeping\* sound which indicates that the automatic doors are about to close. In busy stations some people still try and dive onto the train at this point, but this is not a safe thing to do at all. The scrolling LED display board on the ceiling welcomed me to the south-eastern service and gave the final destination, as well as listing all the stations at which the train would be calling. Sometimes the driver or guard also makes an announcement\*, such as an apology for the late running, or information on where

people need to change trains, if they have other destinations in mind. Each station is announced with the words "We shall shortly be arriving at" and then a different voice says "Please mind the gap between the train and the platform edge." On curved platforms and at older stations, this gap can be quite considerable, both in width and height.

- \* "mostly" Omits the T
- \* Omission phrase "two (or) three"
- \* "bleeping" Keep the hook clear, as "beeping" means the same
- \* "announcement" Omits the M of "-ment". Keep the halved N clear, so that it does not look like Ing "announcing"

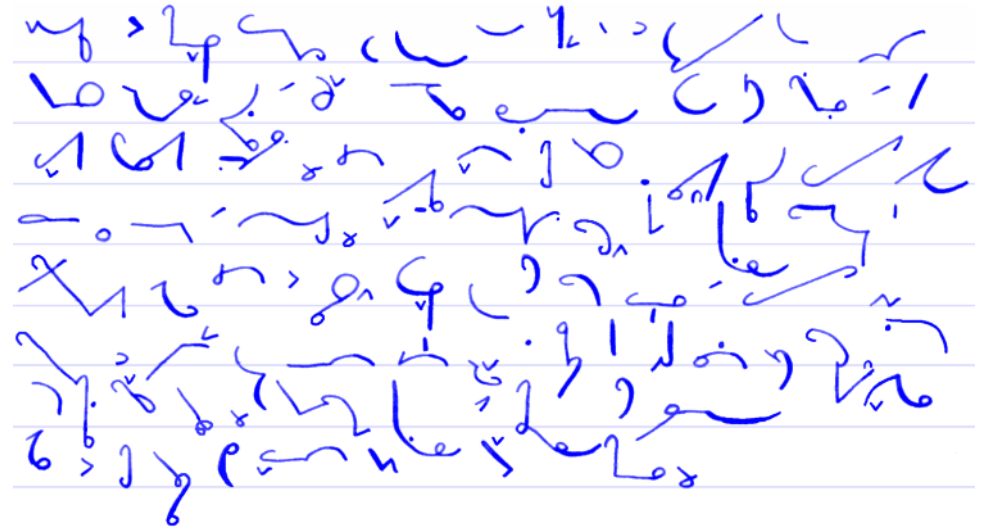


**Train Journey**

I watched the scenery\* whizzing past, mostly trees, grass and weedy\* verges. All the plant growth is cut back at intervals and one sometimes sees gangs of men in high vis\* jackets working by the trackside to remove all the vegetation within a set distance of the tracks. The fast-spreading buddleia shrub can be seen everywhere, as its seed is dust-like and prolific, being drawn along the tracks in the turbulence created by the passing trains. It grows in every tiny crack in concrete and brickwork, and can soon demolish any structure, including brick railway bridges, if not removed. I saw the back yards and car parks of various factories and warehouses, and all the back gardens, from the very untidy and messy, to the neat and well cared-for ones. Many of them seem to have the same notion that the end of their

garden is a convenient place to dump their stuff, away from the house. I often wonder whether those living there get used to the sound of the trains and no longer hear it, or whether they consider it preferable to being\* overlooked by more houses and buildings, or near heavy traffic.

- \* "scenery" Helpful to emphasise the angle between the strokes
- \* "weedy" Insert the vowels, to prevent misreading as "woody"
- \* "high vis" = high visibility
- \* "back yards" As a suffix "-yard" omits the R
- \* "to being" Through the line, based on "to be"



**Train Journey**

I noticed all the trackside equipment, without having any idea of what they were for, metal boxes of various shapes and sizes, cables snaking along on their brackets, and large wide overhead gantries. On some routes my train passes the huge sheds where the rolling stock is kept and maintained. I mentally frown at the defacing graffiti on railway property and even on some of the houses alongside if they are very close, and wonder how the perpetrators\* would react if they came home to find a stranger had done the same

to their furniture, car or prized possessions. Apart from the defacement\* and the trespassing, they are risking their\* lives and those of the train passengers as they climb about by the tracks.

- \* "perpetrators" This is two P strokes, and one doubled T stroke.
- \* "defacement" Omits the M of "-ment". Keep the halved N clear, so that it does not look like Ing "defacing"
- \* "risking their" Doubling for "their"

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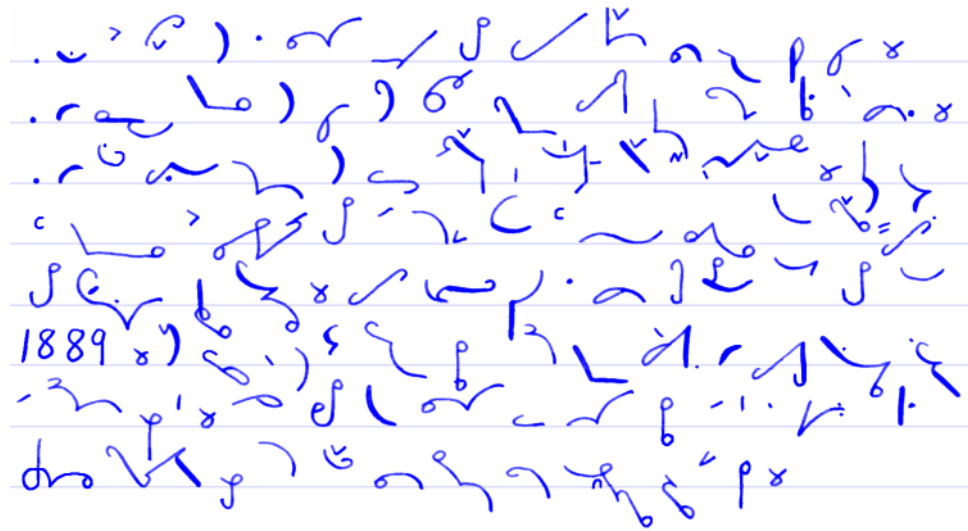


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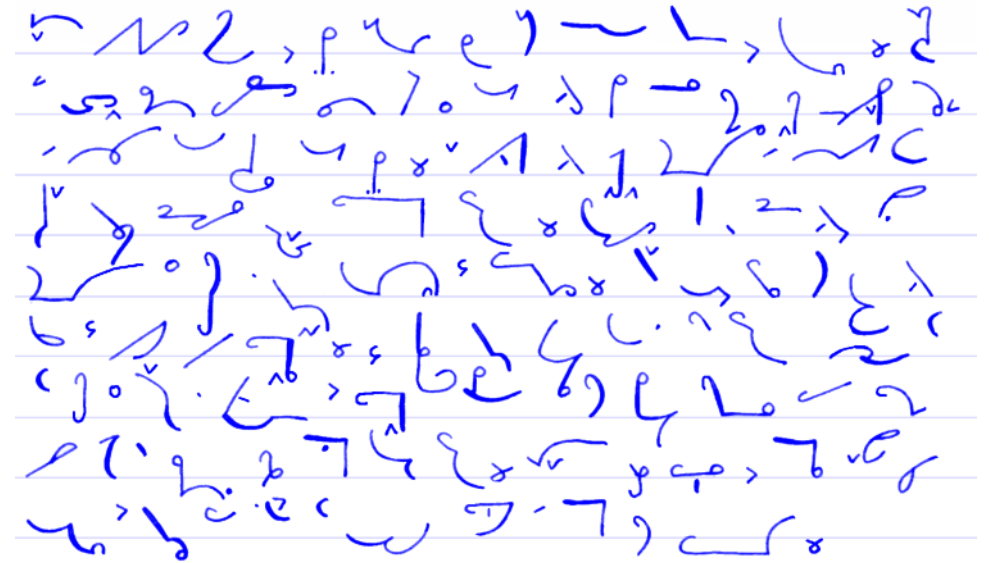


**Train Journey**

The end of the line was a small country station where time seemed to have stood still. The old signal box was still there as well as the brick water tower from the days of steam. The old-fashioned\* waiting room was clean and bright but untouched by modernisation. It was filled with pictures of the history of the station and area, along with many certificates for prize-winning station floral displays over the years. One photograph showed a steam train

standing in the station in 1889. I was pleased to see that the platform seats were big sturdy old wooden benches, comfortable and warm to sit on. Most stations have small cold metal seats, and on a chilly day it is sometimes preferable to stand, or find some spare free newspapers to place on the seat.

\* "old-fashioned" The Ld stroke is always written downwards, so cannot be joined to the F



**Train Journey**

On my return journey to the city, I felt as if I was going "back to the future". I travelled on the underground system once again\*, some of which is in the open as it goes through the outer countryside areas, and mostly\* in tunnels in the city. I rode up and down the escalators and marched along tiled passenger walkways to find the correct platform. Everyone had to walk up the last escalator as there had been a power failure with the equipment. By now the place was filling up fast with the rush hour crowds. When the destination board changes for a particular platform, meaning that that train has arrived, a chunk of the crowd standing there suddenly breaks away

from the rest and they all stream towards the gate for that platform. I like to stand close to the gates whilst still in view of the boards, in order to\* avoid\* that initial crush and get through quickly.

\* Omission phrases "wu(n)s again" "in ord(er to)"

\* "mostly" Omits the lightly-sounded T

\* "avoid" Always insert the diphthong, as "evade" has a similar outline and meaning, especially in a phrase where it is out of position



**Train Journey**

The mainline train that I thought I had missed was actually delayed, and so I boarded that one very quickly. I was relieved not to have to wait another half an hour with the other travellers on the concourse, which could only get worse as rush hour approached. It was a fast train going to my home town in the south-eastern suburbs. The word fast means that it would not be stopping at the intervening stations, as well as the fact that its speed is generally, but not always, higher than the normal trains that do stop at every station.

Five minutes into the journey the inspector came down the aisle. He asked to see everyone's card or ticket, and politely thanked them as he approved each one. Inspectors often choose fast trains for their work because there is no opportunity for fare dodgers to leave the train at the next stop to avoid\* getting caught.

\* "avoid" Always insert the diphthong, as "evade" has a similar outline and meaning, especially in a phrase where it is out of position



**Train Journey**

I got off the train at the large station that serves our town, and had to catch another train to go back one station. The information board display indicated that it would arrive in four minutes, this went down to two minutes, and then back up to four minutes again. I am glad to say that\* it finally arrived, the lighted carriages looking very welcoming as the daylight had now faded. The return journey was very short and within a few minutes I was back at the exact place where I had started. The ding of the bell meant that the train door

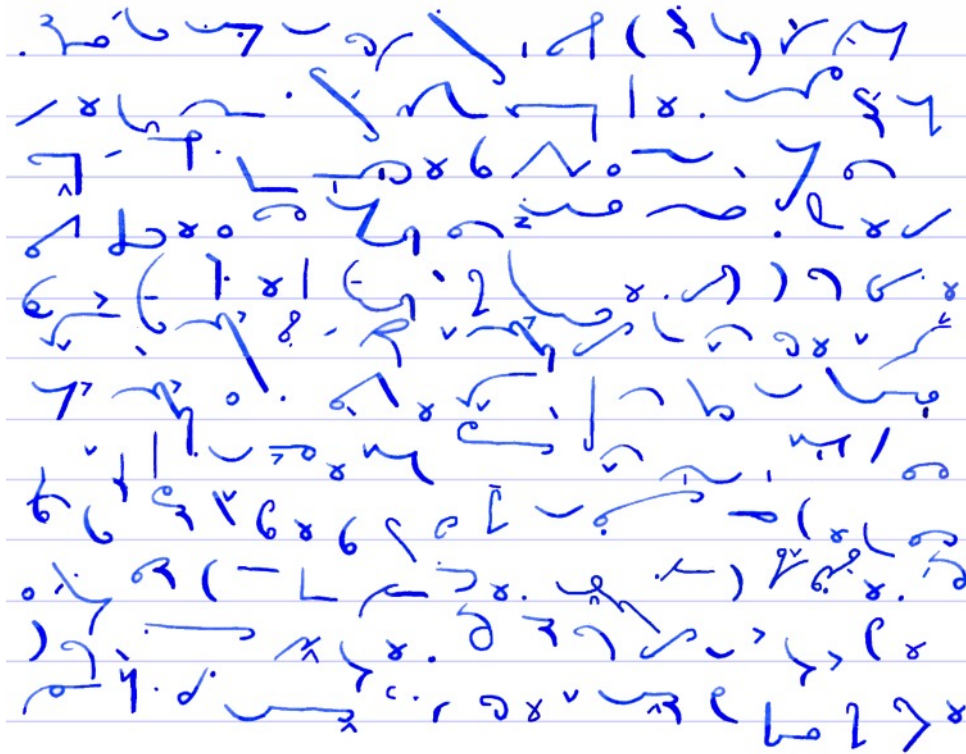
could now be opened. I stepped out, ascended the stairs, descended them on the other side\* and took the bus home. All in all a good day's travelling on our modern version of the iron horse, or at least\* in one of the carriages behind it. (1603 words)

\* Omission phrase "I am glad (to) s(ay) that" "on the oth(er) side"

\* "at least" and "at last" Always insert the vowel







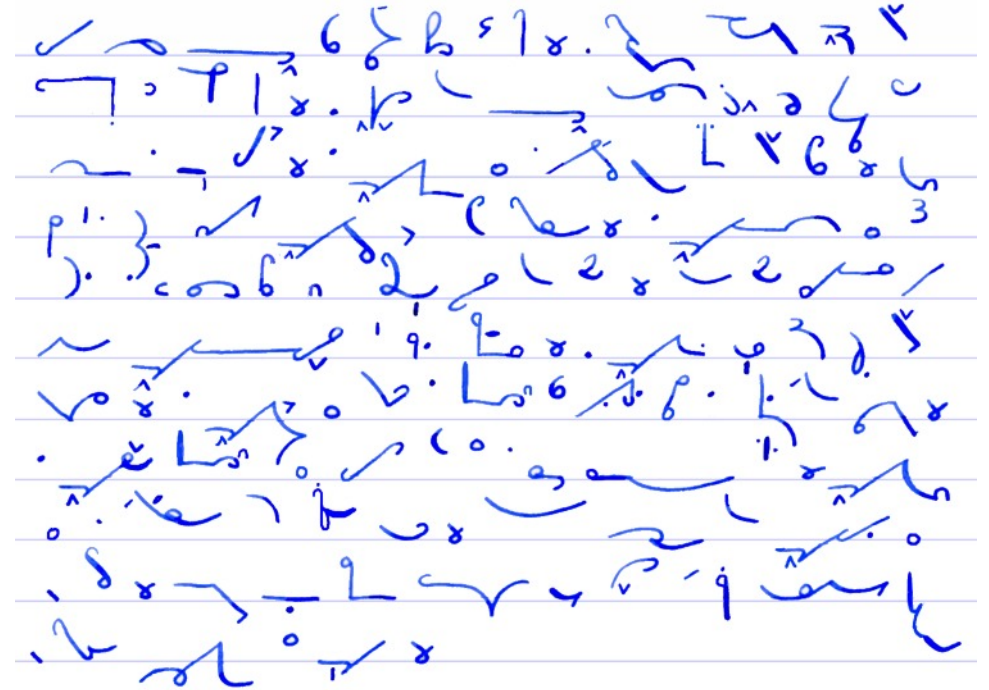
**Doubled Or Not**

The workers often engage in friendly banter but yesterday they BANTERED for their whole lunch hour. If you make a blunder, you will have to correct it. The animals BLUNDERED into the crowd and caused a big commotion. This report is going to engender some heated discussion. His remarks ENGENDERED some annoyance amongst the staff. We listened to the thunder all day. It THUNDERED all through the afternoon. The weather was very THUNDERY. I like to embroider hats and last year I EMBROIDERED one for my friend. I really enjoy EMBROIDERY as a hobby\*. I like to tender my payment in bank notes but this morning I TENDERED it in coins. I never squander my money, but I know that

large sums have been SQUANDERED by others. These people will not tolerate any slander against them. If someone is openly SLANDERED they can take legal action. The newspaper article was highly SLANDEROUS. The horse was free to canter round the field. The horses CANTERED from one end of the field to the other. Last week\* I had a chance encounter with an old friend. I ENCOUNTERED several difficulties during the project.

\* "hobby" "habit" Helpful to insert the first vowel, as the outline and meanings are similar

\* Omission phrase "las(t w)eek"



**Doubled Or Not**

We must counter this false statement with the truth. The problem can only be\* COUNTERED by correcting what caused it. The outline for counter in some compound words changes in order to\* make a good join: A COUNTER-ATTACK is a response\* to being\* attacked by others. If you sit on a see-saw, you are the COUNTERBALANCE to the other person. A COUNTERCLAIM is what you say when someone tells you there is no use for shorthand. In shorthand, circles are written COUNTER-CLOCKWISE on straight strokes. The COUNTERFEIT notes were seized by the police. A COUNTERFOIL is part of a document that is retained, such as a tear-off slip. A COUNTERSIGNED document is one that has a second signature added. COUNTERVIEW is an opposing or contrasting opinion\*. Another meaning for

COUNTERWEIGH is to balance. Keep the Kay stroke clearly under the line and consider inserting the diphthong to prevent misreading as "country".

\* "can only be" The outline for "only" can be written thus in phrases where convenient, but full form when alone

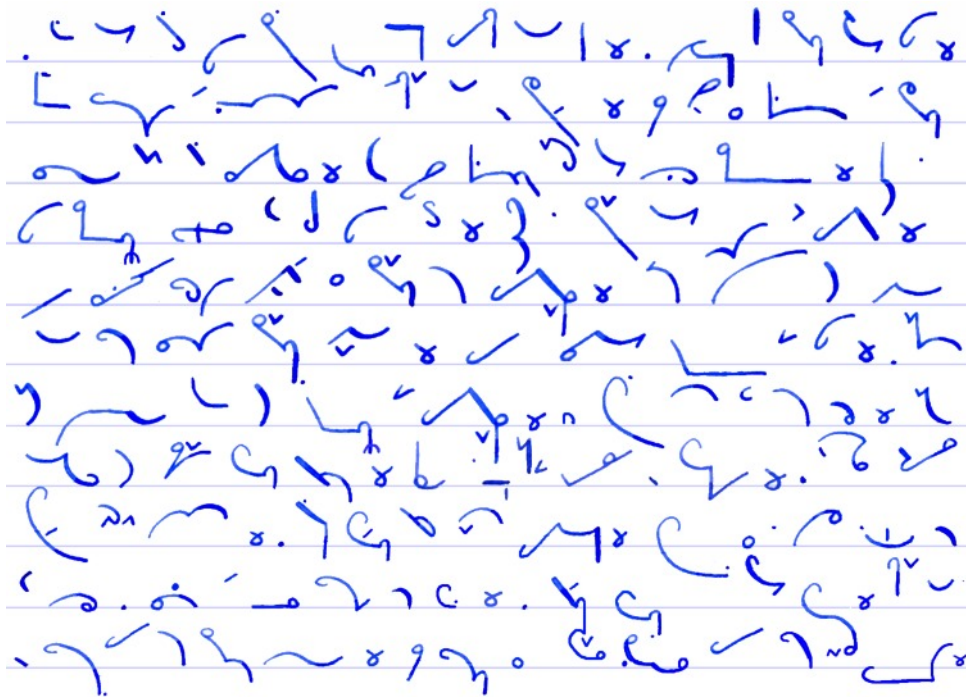
\* Omission phrase "in ord(er to)"

\* "response" As this is the same as the short form "responsibility", it is advisable to always insert the dash vowel

\* "to being" Through the line, based on the short form phrase "to be"

\* "opinion" Keep clearly on the line, as the outline is similar to "information" which is above the line





**Doubled Or Not**

The fat in the pan will spatter if you get water in it. The liquid had SPATTERED all over the wall. Talk clearly and calmly, and try not to splutter. He lost his temper and SPLUTTERED something about bad service. They used tempered iron for the main structure. It was a well-structured course that had been well planned. There was a spider in the middle of the web. Our server-friendly robot has SPIDERED your website. Her letter was written in very small SPIDERY writing. We hung the picture

on the wall. The item I was looking for was PICTURED on the website. You flatter me with your words. I have never been so highly FLATTERED before. It is not a good idea to resort to FLATTERY. The moths always flutter around the lamp. The bat FLUTTERED past my window. Flitter is a less common word that means the same and comes from the word flit. The butterflies FLITTERED over the flowers. Try not to fritter away your spare money. He FRITTERED his savings away very quickly.

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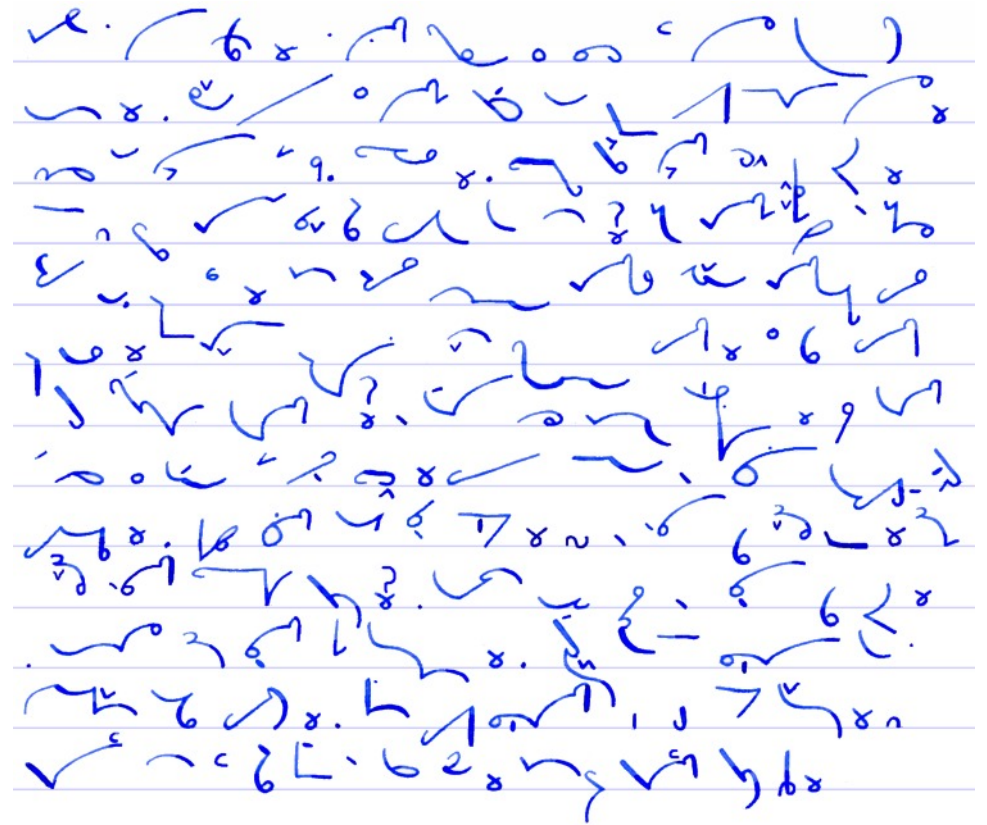
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**Doubled Or Not**

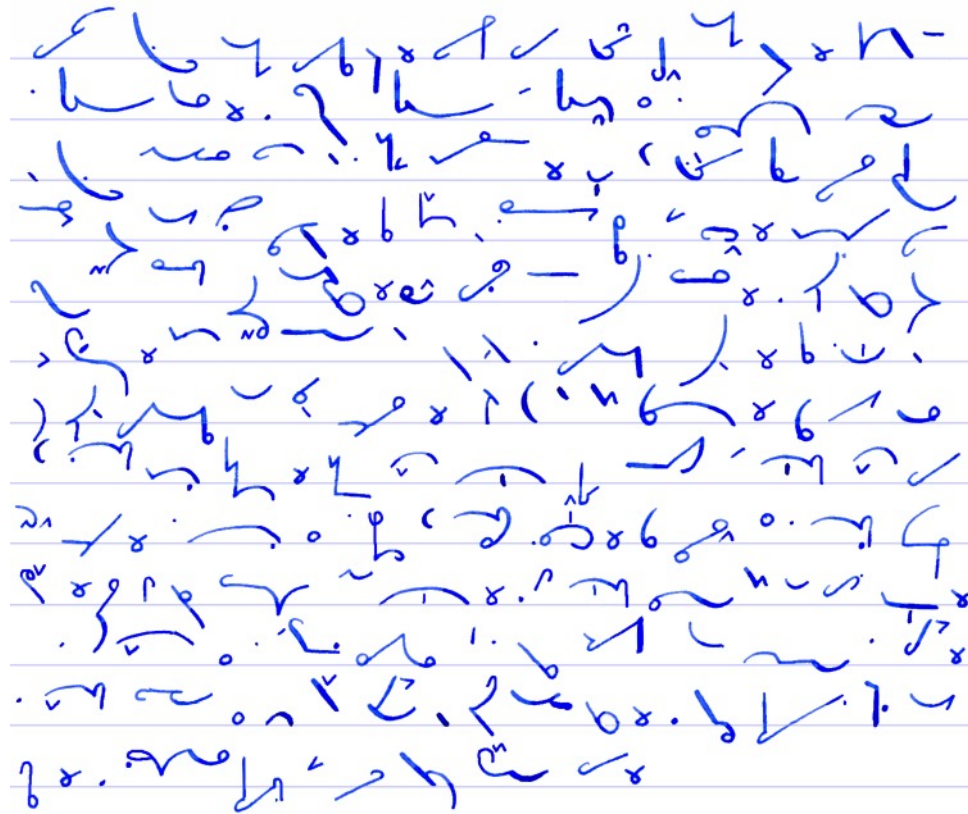
I received a letter this morning. A LETTERED person is someone with letters after their name. The sign writer has LETTERED the poster in big red capital letters. You must not\* loiter on the street corners. The group of boys LOITERED around outside the shop. Can you please alter the height of this shelf for me? I have ALTERED the list of items that we need to take with us. I am always making ALTERATIONS and finding ALTERNATIVE ways to do things. I like to filter my drinking water. Has this water been properly\* FILTERED? To falter means to move unsteadily. He FALTERED and missed his footing on the rough ground. We are going to swelter if we don't open the windows. The tourists SWELTERED in the hot coach. You have to solder these wires together. Were the wires SOLDERED

correctly before? The farmer\* knew he would have to slaughter these sheep. The animals were SLAUGHTERED at the farm. The bonfire can smoulder for a long time in this weather. The damp wood SMOULDERED but did not catch fire. You bewilder me with all this talk of fast shorthand. I am completely BEWILDERED by their decision.

\* Omission phrase "you mus(t) not"

\* "properly" Always insert the first vowel, and the diphone in "appropriately", as these are similar in outline and meaning

\* "farmer" See [www.long-live-pitmans-shorthand.org.uk/distinguishing-outlines-2-rule.htm](http://www.long-live-pitmans-shorthand.org.uk/distinguishing-outlines-2-rule.htm) "former farmer"



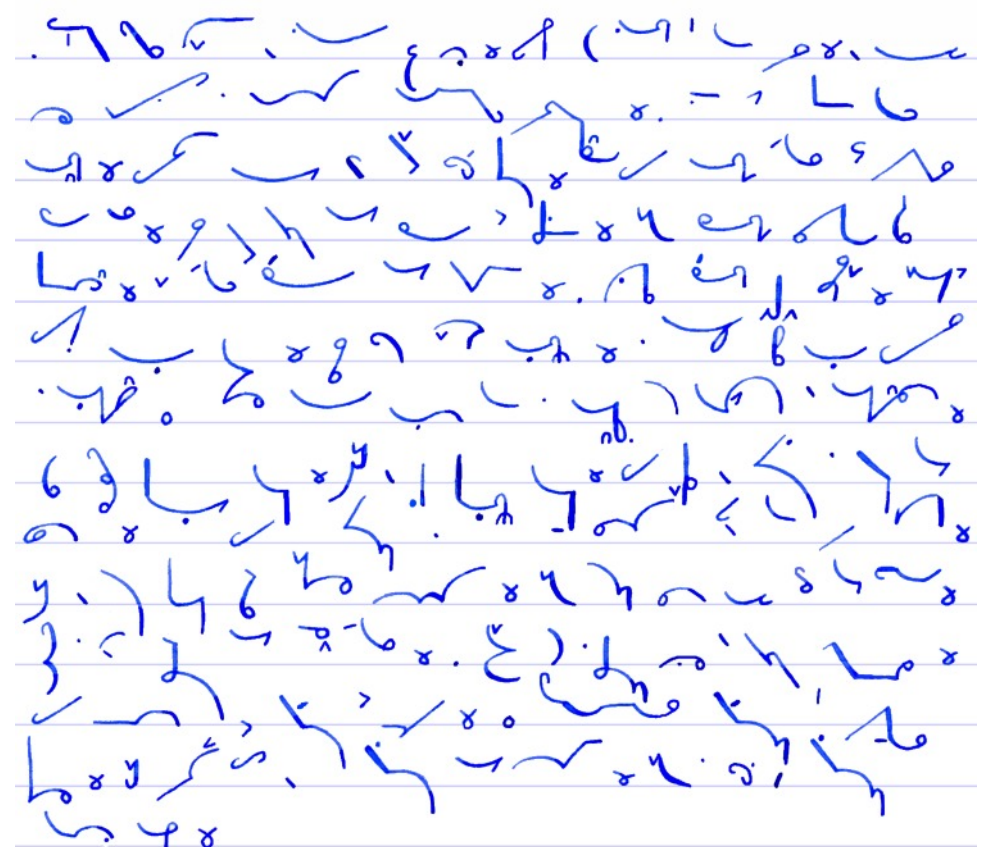
**Doubled Or Not**

We will venture into the woods today. Yesterday we VENTURED down onto the beach. It will be quite an adventure for us. The verb adventure and ADVENTURED has a similar meaning to venture and includes more of an idea of risk. Note that VENDOR does not use doubling because of the vowel in the last syllable. It is time to scatter the seeds on the ground. Tomorrow will bring SCATTERED showers in all places. Sound waves can shatter glass. The SHATTERED pieces fell to the floor. I am going to put up a window shutter. It is common to see SHUTTERED windows in hot countries. I told them all about this matter. These are the things that MATTERED to me at the time. I took my motor out of the garage and MOTORED my way around the country. A meter is an instrument that measures consumption\*. This house has a METERED

electricity supply. He was told to speak clearly and not mutter. The child MUTTERED something about not wanting to go. A mitre is an oblique surface on a piece of wood for making a join. A MITRED corner is made by joining two sharp angled pieces. The birds twitter all day in the trees. The starlings TWITTERED on the roof before flying away.

\* "Vendor" Note that "vender" (not the usual spelling) is doubled. This distinction for -er and -or endings is provided to cover legal terms, where there are nuances of meaning in such pairs e.g. granter, grantor. Note that "inventor" can use doubling, as it is not part of a pair.

\* "consumption" Omits the lightly-sounded p

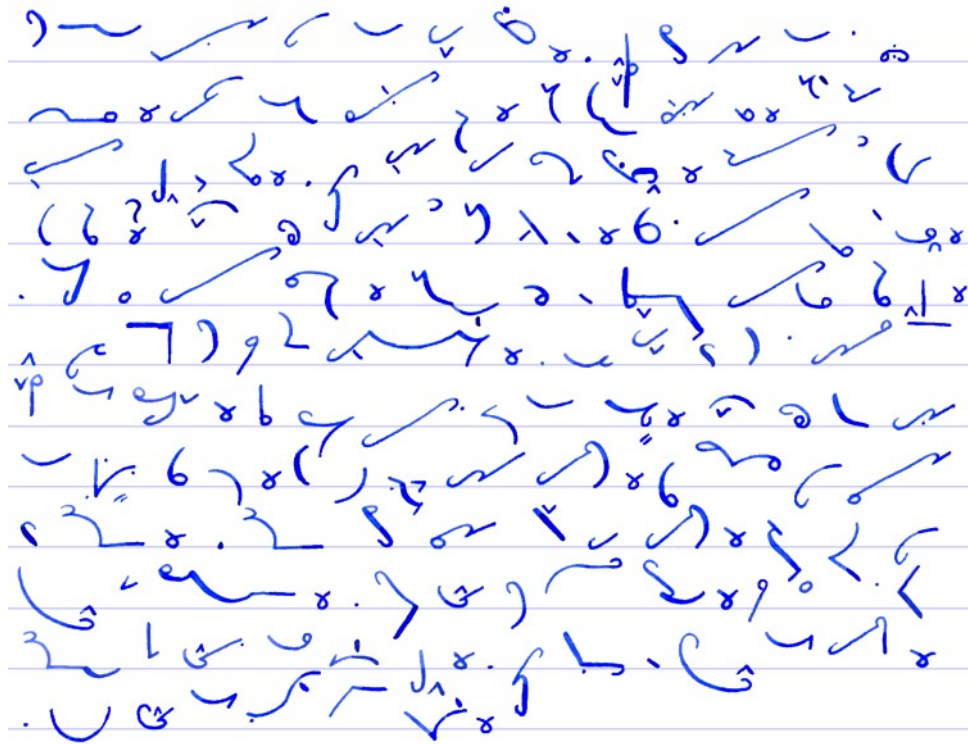


**Doubled Or Not**

The club members like to natter when they meet. Yesterday they NATTERED on for hours. To neuter means to render an animal incapable of reproducing. The cat and the dog have been NEUTERED. We will enter the building by the front door. We ENTERED the office with the reports in our hands. He put the paper in the centre of the desk. I have CENTERED the heading on this document. I often saunter in the park. The ladies SAUNTERED down the high street. I enjoy watching nature films. He is very mild NATURED. A naturalist studies nature, whereas a NATURIST is another name for a nudist or follower of NATURISM.

These processes denature the food. I do not wish to eat DENATURED food. We decided to charter a boat for the summer. We CHARTERED a small yacht for our holiday. I wish to order twenty of these items immediately. I have ORDERED some new plants for the garden. There was a lot of disorder in the accounts office. The filing was a DISORDERED mess of paper and booklets. We came to the border of the country. His frankness BORDERED on rudeness at times. I did not really want to barter in the market. I have a friend who BARTERED for me instead.





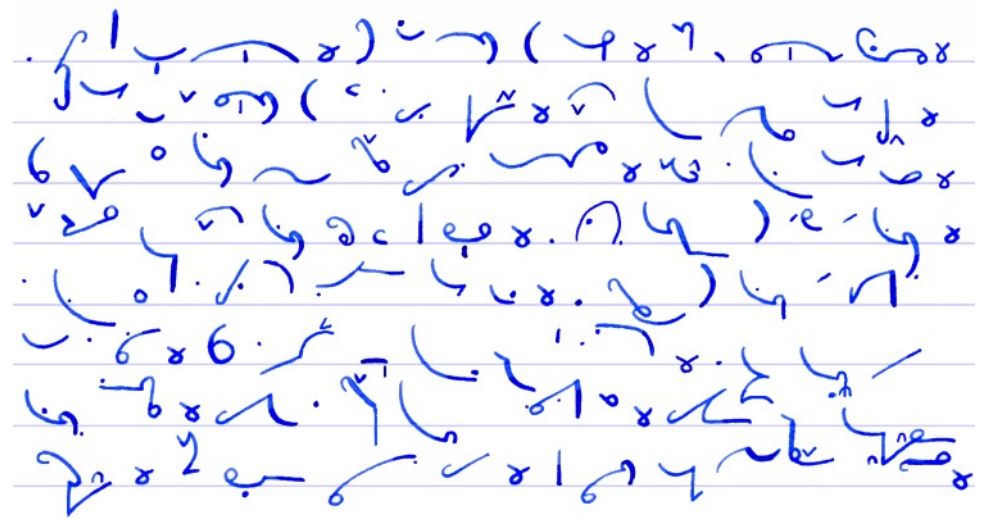
**Doubled Or Not**

They are going to render the wall in white plaster. The outside has been RENDERED in a cement mix. We will never surrender to them. I think they have SURRENDERED to us. I thought I would wander down to the shops. The children WANDERED away from the playground. I wonder what they will think of this? My friends WONDERED what I was up to. This is a WONDERFUL piece of news. The engine is WONDERFULLY\* smooth. I have no words to describe the WONDERFULNESS of this outcome. "How will you get there?" he asked WONDERINGLY. The new white building was a WONDROUS sight in the sunshine. It is nearly winter here in England. My friends have WINTERED in Italy this year. They wish to avoid\* the

WINTRY weather. These storms will hinder the building work. The work has been HINDERED by wet weather. I believe the ship will founder on the sandbank. The project FOUNDERED through lack of planning. He has a job working at the FOUNDRY in his home town. The children began to flounder in the water. The fish FLOUNDERED in the shallow rock pool.

\* "wonderfully" Same as the short form "wonderful". If necessary to differentiate, you would have to write the "-fully" part separately to ensure accurate reading back.

\* "avoid" Always insert the diphthong, as "evade" has a similar outline and meaning, especially in a phrase where it is out of position



**Doubled Or Not**

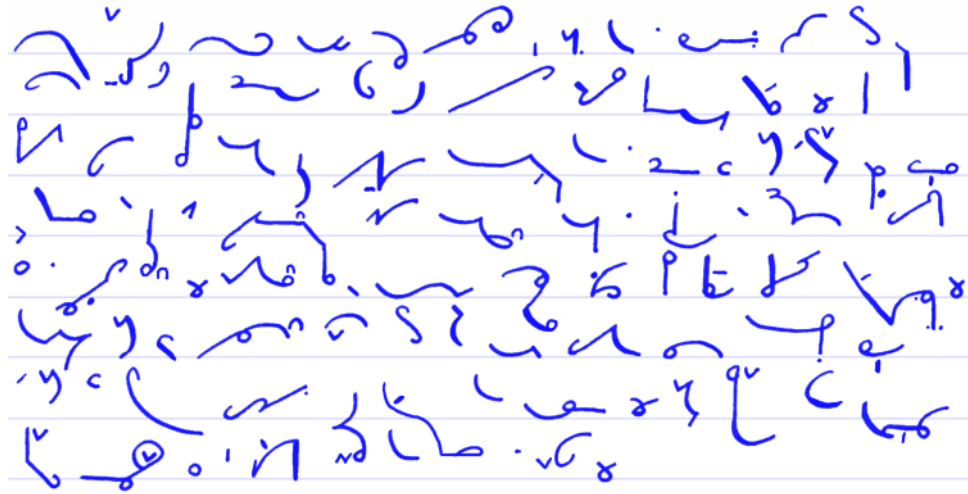
The children had no mother. Their aunt MOTHERED them instead. I tried to smother the flames. In the end I SMOTHERED them with a wet towel. My father lives in the town. This bull has FATHERED many prize-winning animals. I found a feather in the nest. I always feed my FEATHERED friends when it snows. The lacy fabric was soft and FEATHERY. A fetter is a chain or shackle for the feet. The prisoner was FETTERED and held in a cell.

This is a really good feature to have on a car. The film FEATURED our favourite actors\*. We have a bright future ahead of us. We like to design FUTURISTIC furniture. I saw the snake slither away. It SLITHERED into the long grass.

\* "actors" Note that the outline for "actress" should always have its second vowel written in, to differentiate from "actors"

Handwritten practice lines for the 'Doubled Or Not' section on the right page.





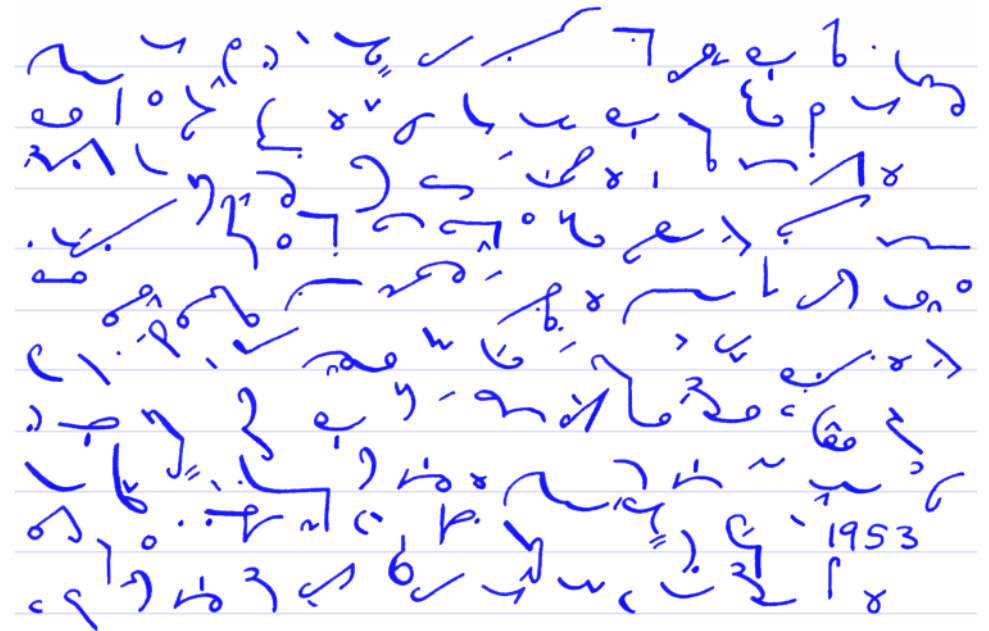
**First Snow**

Maybe I shouldn't mention New Year's resolutions, but I did have a sneaky little plan to do more short distance walking than usual, rather than always taking the bus. It started well enough but was rudely interrupted for a week when I was obliged to stay close to the box of tissues and the eucalyptus oil infused into a container of warm water as an inhalant. I refuse to

name the mischievous ailment as it doesn't deserve the publicity. Fortunately I was able to resume my plan, although now we have some interesting snow and ice, with further wintry showers forecast for next week\*. I think the striding along vigorously type of exercise is on hold for a while.

\* Omission phrase "ne(k)s(t w)eeek"

Blank lined paper for writing practice.



**First Snow**

Living in the south east of England, we rarely get serious snow, and it is a few years since it has fallen thickly. I still have the new snow boots that have been sitting in the wardrobe for two or three\* years, fresh clean and unused. But I am ready. The footwear\* drawer is getting more crowded, as I have been using up the yarn to make socks, house slippers, leg warmers and wristies\*. Looking at the weather news has, however, put a stop to all our musings about the fun and prettiness of the white scenery. Up the east coast of Britain there have been\* snow, ice and storm surge warnings, with thousands of people being advised to evacuate their homes. Leaving your home and not knowing what will happen to it is a ghastly\* thought, but this

is at least\* better than the North Sea flood of 1953, when people and their homes were washed away in the night, without any warning at all.

\* Omission phrase "two (or) three"

\* "footwear" Insert the vowel, as this is similar to "knitwear" and "underwear"

\* "wristies" = wrist warmers

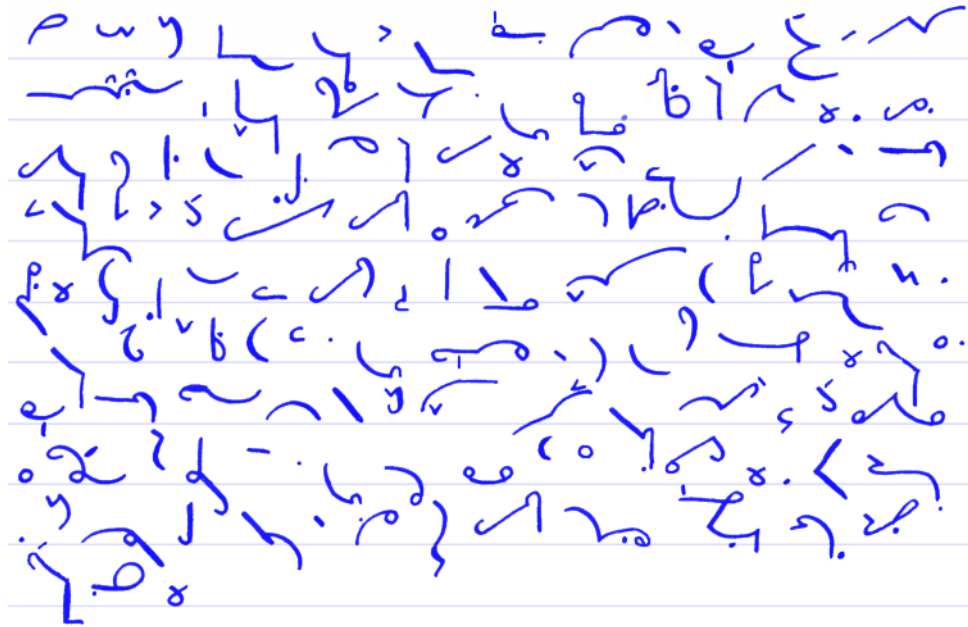
\* Omission phrase "there (have) been" in order to gain a good join

\* "ghastly" Advisable to insert the vowel, similar to "costly"

\* "at least" and "at last" Always insert the vowel

Blank lined paper for writing practice.





**First Snow**

Last night I was taking photos of the big soggy lumps of snow falling and rapidly accumulating, but tonight there are only a few streaks and traces of it left. The winds we have had throughout the day have eaten most of it away. My goldfish are all gathered on the bottom of the pond, where the water is warmer or at least\* the temperature more stable. They do not eat in cold weather but when it becomes milder they start to move about a bit and then I test them with a few crumbs to see if they

are interested. Pretty as a snow-covered garden may be, I do not like really bitter mornings when the pond surface is frozen, although it has been quite a few years since that has happened. The job of clearing the ice must be\* done before all else, so that the water remains oxygenated and free of waste product gases.

\* "at least" and "at last" Always insert the vowel

\* Omission phrase "mus(t) be"

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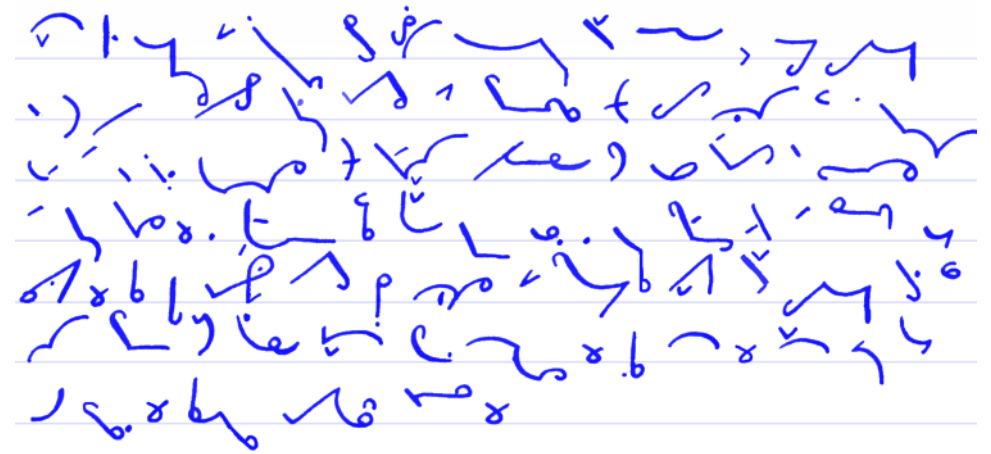
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**First Snow**

My day indoors on the computer has been constantly interrupted by going to the kitchen window to see our resident pair of robins, and the blackbirds (one male with a poorly foot and two competing females) politely requesting\* their next portion of crumbs and bird pellets. The dunnock\* with its tiny beak needs the bits broken up and scattered under the hedge. It is difficult to resist the robin sitting motionless on the

branch right by the window pane, with his little black eyes fastened on my every movement. "It's me. I'm here for the usual, please." It is not possible\* to refuse, of course. (547 words)

\* "requesting " Optional contraction

\* "dunnock" = hedge sparrow

\* Omission phrase "it is not poss(ible)"

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**Looking For Trouble**

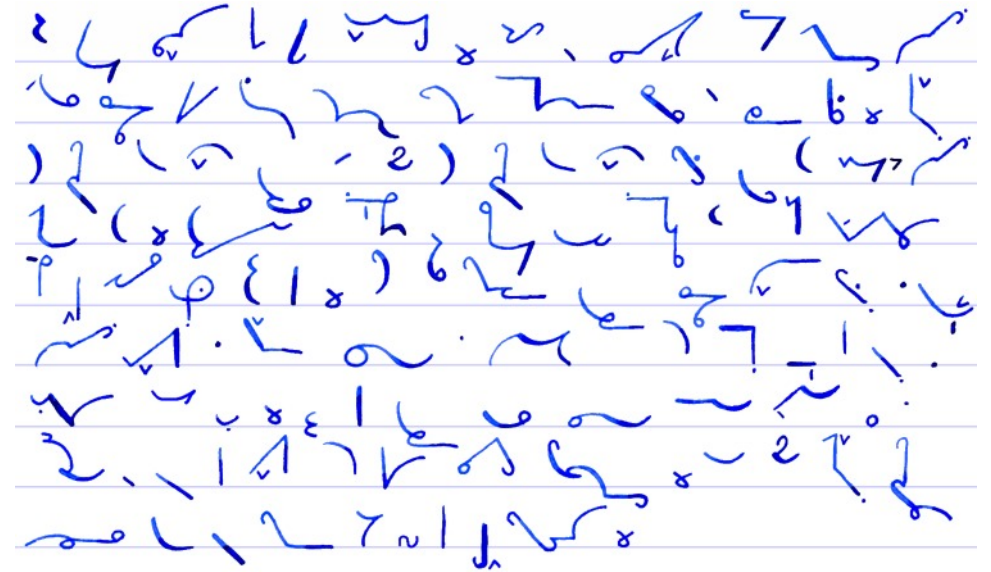
No, I never did. I never looked for trouble. I was always aghast at other children who thought nothing of it. They did what they wanted, whether it was allowed or not. They did not care about rules and regulations\*, results and consequences that would come from their\* actions. They thought it was worth the risk, and maybe it added to the fun and sense of achievement. They may even have been surprised when they were caught, as kids' activities are often done without much thinking ahead,

other than the short term goal that is being pursued\*. I was never tempted to join in, and always preferred to put some distance between us.

\* Omission phrase "rules (and re)gulations"

\* "from their" Doubling for "their"

\* "pursued" Note that "pursue" and all other derivatives keep the stroke S

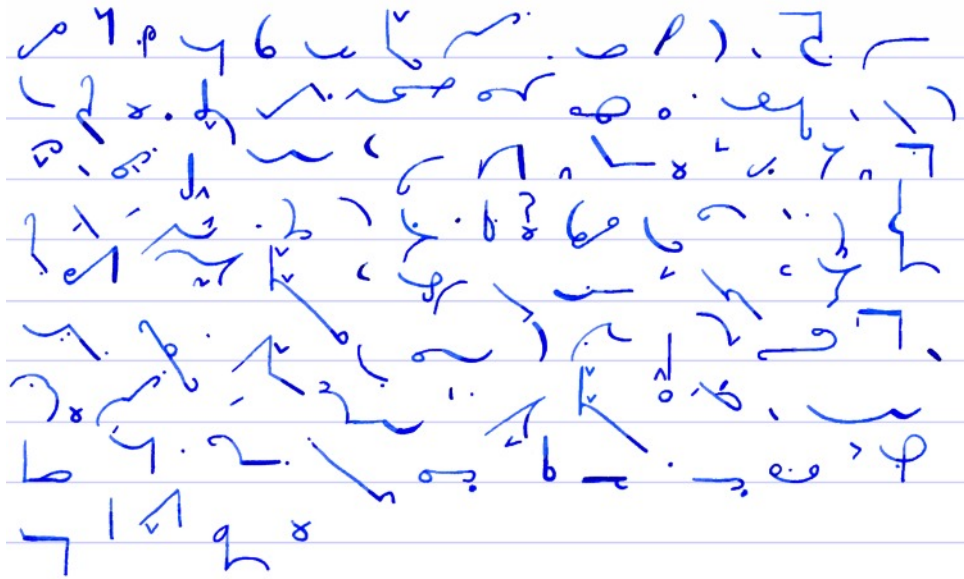


**Looking For Trouble**

All that changed slightly at the age of 19. I went to secretarial college and began learning office skills, which are far removed from the academic subjects of school days. Typing was trouble for my fingers and shorthand was trouble for my brain, even though I enjoyed learning and doing them. They were not accustomed to these strange new activities that I had purposely sought out and was insisting that they do. They are practical physical skills, like playing a piano, learning to ride a bike, swimming a

length, or getting good at putting the netball in the net. When you do physical things, something going wrong is a warning to put it right, or it will happen over and over again\*. In shorthand and typing, troublesome mistakes have to be practised until you have it down perfectly.

\* Omission phrase "over (and) over again". The second "over" is reversed to gain a convenient join.



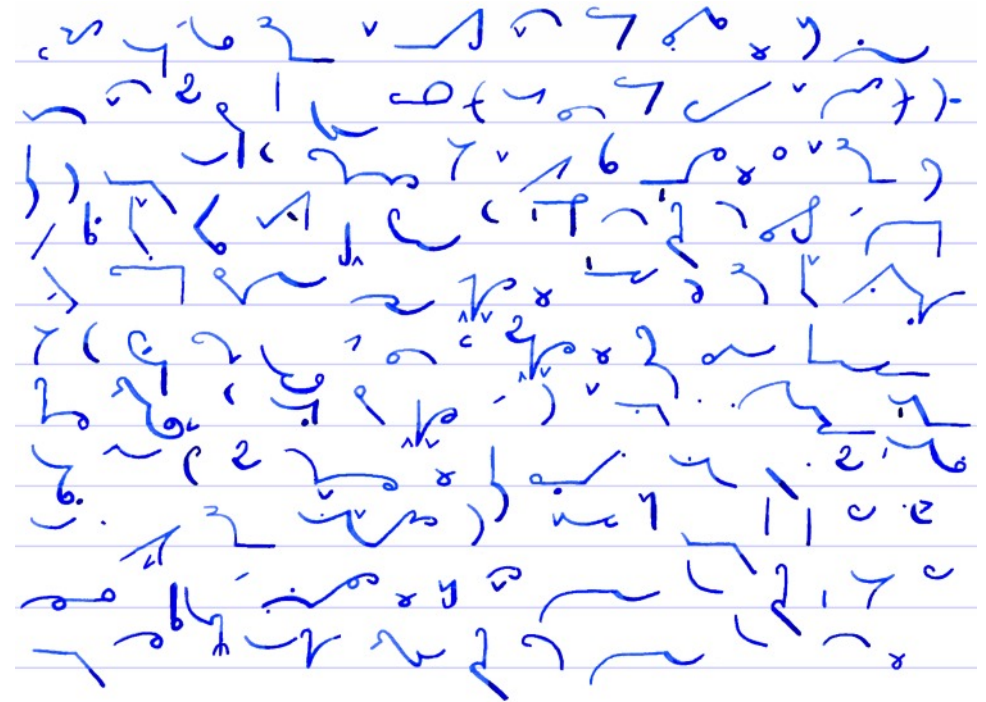
**Looking For Trouble**

Once I had settled into this new type of learning, the next stage was to actively look for trouble. The desire to repeat and increase the small successes is an incentive to put your mind to hunting down anything that will hold you back. Why wait until you get tripped up and ruin\* an assignment\* or fail a test? This was even more of an issue at that time, as we had manual typewriters, that instantly put the ink on the paper with only the unhappy prospect of a retype if something was left out or the corrections

got too messy. Learning and working on a real typewriter, as opposed to entering text onto a forgiving computer screen, does give you a keen sense of the necessity to get it right first time.

\* "ruin" Using stroke N, rather than hook, in order to match all its derivatives e.g. "ruination, ruinous/ly"

\* "assignment" Contraction that omits the first N sound



**Looking For Trouble**

When I went into office work, I carried on my college habits. I was aiming to improve my shorthand speed at evening classes (in the same college where I learned) so it was easy to keep in that frame of mind\* until I reached those goals. As I worked through each day's typing jobs, I wrote down everything that caused\* me trouble or hesitation, and looked up the correct spelling, meaning and outline. Awkward words were typed repeatedly until they flowed from the fingers, and the same with shorthand outlines. There were\* certain technical terms\* and abbreviations that needed special outlines and so I kept an alphabetical notebook for these and any other shorthand reminders. It was scary enough to be a shorthand novice in a real

work environment, so I knew I had to keep at it, in order to\* avoid\* mistakes, discomfiture and embarrassment. I did not mind looking for trouble, but only in order to\* keep myself in control and prevent trouble from looking for me.

\* Omission phrases "frame (of) mind" "there (w)ere" "in ord(er to)"

\* "caused" Special outline, to distinguish from "cost"

\* "technical terms" You could make this an omission phrase "tech-terms"

\* "avoid" Always insert the diphthong, as "evade" is similar in outline and meaning

